

General Rules for Networking

PART 1

In order to be effective in a business network there should be a connection between the individuals in the network based on trust and honest bilateral cooperation when each person in the network has a positive experience of every other person based on achievement of business goals and business results. In this instance they tend to sell each other to their friends and acquaintances.

- Remember that one of the first rules in networking is about providing solutions and tangible results, about being genuine and authentic (meaning being yourself rather than putting on a pretense), building trust and relationships, and seeing how you can help others before you ask for help yourself.
- Make sure you have your business goals thought out and well defined (use the Keys to an Achievable Outcome followed by the Creating Your Future® process). Once you have your goals well defined, you can pick out people who will help you achieve those goals rather than being in the wrong group. Some networking groups are based more on learning new things, others are focused in making new contacts, and others on making business connections. Choose your networking group wisely. Try several until you settle where you feel most support and where your contribution is valued. Notice whether people are genuine or driven solely by self-interest. Are people supportive of one another? Is the leadership of that networking group competent for your business goals purposes or just politically motivated? Participate in as many networking events as you can before you choose and before you are accepted as a permanent participating member.
- Ask open-ended questions in networking conversations. Refer to Project No. 20. These are questions that ask who, what, where, when, and how rather than conversational postulates which are questions answered with a yes or a no.
- An important point to remember – make yourself useful through resources you can offer. If you are known as a resource for others, people will seek you for suggestions, ideas, names of other people, etc. This keeps you in their awareness.
- Have a clear understanding of your differentiation point. (Refer to page 12 in the *Marketing NLP Training Manual*) In order to get referrals, you must first have a clear understanding of what you do, be able to articulate this and explain it clearly and succinctly to others. This is your elevator pitch and the understanding of your unique selling proposition. (USP)
- Communicate clearly in respect to what are your business goals, what are you looking

for how others may help you. Avoid using the old cliché "How may I help you?", as for many no immediate answer will come to mind.

- Once you get referrals, follow through with them quickly and efficiently. When people give you referrals, your actions are a reflection on them. Respect and honor that and your referrals will grow.
- Maintain personal relationship as often as possible with your most important contacts – (see below). Season greetings, birthday wishes go a long way to keep you in their awareness. If possible get together and share ideas.

Many people who go to networking events think that the quantity of the business cards or telephone numbers collected matters the most. This is based on the social media false ideas of lots of “likes” = lots of friends, and lots of friends = lots of customers. However, this is not correct. Here are some other important points about networking:

1. Who are your most important contacts?

Who are the people whose presence in your life is valuable to your career? The 10-15 most important professional contacts in your life? Make a list of those people and keep a regular contact with them. What are their values, beliefs, interests, concerns?

If you're at the beginning of your networking experience, start off networking with your existing connections. Getting in touch with old friends, distant relatives, and old school friends with can be a good stepping stone because you're reaching out, but you're not approaching complete strangers.

2. The next level of importance.

These people may be in the 20-50 contacts and are people who have assisted you in the past and could do so in the future, however they are not close to you as the first group. They may be on your list of FB “friends” however you are not close to them.

3. The rest.

Your extended circle of acquaintances and “followers”. This includes your online networks (professional social media services, such as LinkedIn)

4. The best way to begin a close connection is to assist someone first.

It is very important to find out your contacts values, beliefs, and concerns. If you do, you can link their need/concern/value to what you have to offer.

5. Be different.

If you want to make a connection with a new contact, don't be afraid to be different. All people are busy and everyone is there to make contacts. If you want to provoke curiosity and interest say something different or ...



6. Cultivate people, not jobs.

It's not easy to break into networks already formed. Think about the person(s) in your list of acquaintances has a lot of connections and cultivate that relationship. If there is no-one you know like this, begin building and cultivating relationships with new people you met at networking events.

7. Give before you get.

When you want help or assistance for your project, make sure you invest through time in the person you ask for help. Make sure you do this BEFORE you ask for help. If you show up years later and ask for assistance from someone you met in the past, and barely know in the present, your chance of getting help is almost nil. So, give before you get.

8. Be Giving.

Really successful people are people willing to give. They are sincerely interested in helping others and do this not out of calculated action but out of genuine desire to assist. In fact one of our very successful friends always used to say, "Just let me know how I can help you." and his help always came without strings attached.

WHAT TO DO

Do it, do it, do it and do it

If you've never done it before, networking can seem like a daunting task especially if you're an introvert by nature. However, it does not have to be so. Like sales, there is no way around it. You get over the discomfort by taking action and doing it. In this endeavor, indeed, practice makes better. You won't become an expert over night, but in time you will. But if you don't participate in any networking, it will not happen magically to you. Therefore...do it!

The typical advice that's given to entry-level employees — "Invite people to coffee!" "Connect with them on LinkedIn!" is not enough for people who are already having great careers. It is the very beginning stage you should strive to move beyond as fast as you can. If you're already having a great career, you need to leverage an entirely different strategy.

Being constantly bombarded with Facebook and LinkedIn connection requests and endless attempts to "pick your brain for free" is not working. Trying to set yourself aside in the midst of that noise is a losing battle which is time and energy consuming, and you probably should not spend your time answering all these requests or writing a bunch of cold emails every day, anyway. Remember the only two commodities you have in life are time and energy.

Here are some other tips which together with what you already know will help in doing presentations at networking events. Remember, you need to make yourself and your product and service (your trainings) desirable enough to have people search you out.



1. **Your differentiation point.** Share something that seems novel and even exotic to them and you will capture their interest. It is not easy to identify what's most interesting about yourself as you are you and even the coolest thing can come to seem dull, boring, and ordinary. Therefore, start with your friends and acquaintances and ask them to tell you what are the qualities that they find special about you. Encourage them to tell you the truth. Even an apparently bad trait can become a good one if utilized wisely (i.e. stubbornness can be transformed into determination to achieve goals and into power to follow through). Once walking into a hotel I started a conversation with the bell person and the stories they knew and their experiences were fascinating enough to make them special. (Tip: look in the Marketing NLP manual on pages 12-14.)
2. **Make sure you understand well what you are selling.** In other words, know your NLP and Time Line Therapy®, NLP Coaching and Hypnosis really well. Almost nothing elicits more interest than genuine expertise. If someone is drawn to a topic that you're knowledgeable about, you'll move to the top of their list.
3. **Build rapport, build rapport, and... build rapport.** Sometimes the most banal occurrences strike closer to home than business expertise itself. Common love for a certain food, preference for a certain vacation spot can work a long way toward building networking relationships.
4. **If you're not invited to networking events, you can host one yourself.** You can do it monthly, or even twice a month depending on your time. Remember that when you're the host, pulling together a great event allows you to invite successful people who you might not normally consider your equal level associates but who embrace the chance to network with other high-quality professionals using your event. This is not easy to do, so do not attempt unless you already have a big name in your field. An easier version is to start a Meetup group on your own with special invitation people providing that you don't spend too much of your two valuable commodities (time and energy) to make it work.
5. **If you ARE invited to a networking event as a speaker,** you start with a big advantage compared to anyone else not trained in the NLP Trainer's Training. You know how to do presentations that work. Prepare your presentation based on what you know from the Trainer's Training. Your – usually one hour long presentation – should be mostly WHY, and it must contain a little piece of “magic” which is a fantastic demonstration that leaves the audience absolutely in awe and curious to know more. Have a Power Point prepared for this presentation, have your brochure ready and available right then and there (see Project No. 10), and your business cards.
 - **Learn as much as you can about who's your audience:** Not every presentation (which is actually a pitch for your trainings and services) will work for everyone.

Depending on the type of audience sitting in front of you, you will have to change the approach. Some people respond to children's issues, some to business, marketing, management or sales issues, some to how to find a new career, etc. There are many different networking groups and interests out there. Bottom line, if you know your audience – whether it's to just one person or a larger group – do some research to ensure you're presenting at the appropriate context and logical type. If your presentation is too lightweight and too chunked down, you'll bore them; if it is too in depth, filled with NLP Jargon and too abstract, you'll confuse them. Either way, the rule is that a confused audience will not search further information and your marvelous presentation will fall on deaf ears.

- **What's In It For Me or WIIFM:** this seems to be passé, however it holds true more than ever. Bearing in mind the above paragraph, and based on the info you can gather about your audience ask yourself what are the possible challenges faced by this group of people? These are their needs you need to address. You may be doing some mind reads, but do your best to find real concerns and needs. Chunk up to two or maximum three major needs. Do not attempt to talk about many in one hour presentation. You will be overbearing and the result is confusion. And of course, your presentation will be a gigantic WHY your training and what you teach specifically can solve these needs and concerns. Stay focused on benefits rather than features. Nobody really cares about a swish pattern or a mapping across. But everybody cares about getting off a food addiction. Notice the difference? Focus on presenting benefits for them rather than trotting out what you know and what's in your training for an hour. If you give your audience the feeling that you've prepared your presentation especially for them, they will respond favorably.
- **Practice makes perfect.** Another old cliché, however still valid. Continually learn and practice your presentation in front of as many audiences you only can. One of the most important and daunting tasks for any networker is that of becoming an accomplished speaker. Congratulations! You already have that task well accomplished. It is called the Trainer's Training. So you start with an advantage. Your metaphors (keep them very short – you have maximum one hour and if you have a 2 hours slot to talk, you can consider yourself lucky). You have the 4mat but remember that in the network marketing presentation you will do everything under the big WHY umbrella. Your whole presentation will be a massive WHY they should train with you.
- **Will all your networking presentation produce the same results?** Obviously not! Groups are different, you will be feeling differently depending on how tired, or how inspired you are, what events are happening in the community, at work or even in the world at that time. For example during an election period few people

pay attention the trainings as everyone is focused on elections. However, make a benchmark for yourself in respect to what results you want to achieve from each networking meeting. What is your goal? Set up a number, and go for it. As you get better and better and you achieve it easily, then up the number.

- **How to handle hacklers.** Again, from the Trainer's Training, remember how to handle hacklers and how to answer questions as in “Questions Are the Answers” section. Do not let yourself be intimidated by questions even if they seem challenging or even antagonistic. Learn how to handle objections well. This is very much helped by the section on page 143 in the Marketing NLP manual, by your ability to reframe on the spot, and your Sleight of Mouth skills. Use metaphors in answering. If you did your chains of anchors well at the beginning of the Trainer's Training, you will kick into a resourceful state automatically rather than panicking that you don't know what to say. If you did not do those chains of anchors well, do them again. Exchange work with someone else in the forum and help each other out. If you do many networking presentations, eventually you will face someone who will try to challenge you and what they're being told. Do not fall into the trap of digging your heels in and also not try to fight because this can turn the whole presentation into an argument which will work against you. Turn the challenge into an advantage. Stick to your point with logical arguments. Spotting the logical fallacies in the opposing person can help you a lot (achieved by doing the exercises from the Hidden Magical Language Training). Linguistic skills will make here all the difference. A simple tip: when you're faced with negativity, always start your answer with “That's a very good question...”, adopt the Computer stance from the Satir category, and answer in a feedback sandwich format. You can use already set anchors on stage if you did embedded metaphors combines with stage anchoring. And argue your point truthfully, but logically and with examples. Stick to your position without Negative Emotions. Maintain trainer state.
- **Make a demonstration that leaves the audience breathless, intrigued and wanting to know more.** Show the “magic of NLP, or Time Line Therapy®”. Let people have a practical experience of your skills. Do not teach anything. Networking events are not for teaching. They are for marketing purposes. But a firsthand experience of an NLP or Time Line Therapy® technique goes a long way.
- **Be truthful and speak from your heart.** People buy from those they know, like, and trust. Group rapport is a must, and always remember the 2 sections from the Trainer's Training: 1. how to move your energy in the body which is different from men to women, and 2. How to extend your energy over the whole room. If you close yourself and go into internally-focused down-time you won't let them get to know the real you. You don't have to be perfect; you can talk about your own challenges, beliefs, family, hopes, and dreams. Doing so gives your prospects more opportunity to identify with you so you can use the similarities

to build rapport.

- **Use lots of metaphors rather than talking about boring NLP stuff.** Use embedded open metaphors at the beginning, but also closed metaphors throughout your presentation to support your point. Again this of benefits rather than features. You are excited about your trainings, and you may tend to delve into the features of those trainings (WHAT you teach), however it is not exciting at all for a brand new audience who has no experience of NLP, Time Line Therapy®, Hypnosis, etc. People want to know about results and how they can get them aside from how it will help them immediately. They want the bottom line. There's plenty of time to get to the detail once they come to your trainings, but to start this way could send most of your possible prospects to sleep. Remember this is not a university lecture. Sell a feeling.
- **Use humor and be entertaining.** This is important, but always remember don't be a distractor, or you won't be taken seriously, your intention is not to become a clown. There is a fine line you need to walk as, in general, when the mood of the audience is light, they feel more relaxed and amenable. The golden rule is to move people to change states: make 'em laugh, make 'em cry, then they buy. Most people buy on an emotional impulse. Again you are at an advantage here, as most untrained network presenters do not know about Chaining Anchors with metaphors, and thus changing states of the whole audience is something you already master.
- **Ask a lot of questions and open your audience to questions:** Instead of telling your prospects how it is, get them answering questions. 1. It creates compliancy and 2. It makes it for an interactive presentation. For example, rather than saying "Did you know that only 0.1% of people know how their values influence everything they do in their lives?", ask them "What percentage of people do you think have any ideas of how much their values influence their lives?" (I made that one up – don't quote me on it). Understand the process. Turn the questions around. It is almost like you're preparing them to the purchase decision rather than pushing them into buying. Make sure you remember the "What If" section. Let them ask you questions. The more questions you get, the better you can sell your trainings and services.
- **Make it easy by offering an incentive to act now.** Again, not being trained in sales, many network marketers give a great presentation and then forget to ask for the order. Think of reasons why they should sign up for your training today. Some possible reasons might be because you are offering a special price reduction OR maybe because prices are about to increase OR there's a training deadline coming up so they'll get their skills sooner OR you're offering a discount because you're loving the networking organizers and it is just for them OR

because your next training you'll be working with a small group so they will get your undivided attention, etc. Whatever it is, tell them, and secure the interest to act now.

PART 2

If after doing all of the above networking does not work for you, it is probably because:

At the beginning, all new trainers are networking solely to grow their business. Mistakenly they think that networking alone will provide the magic which will make their business successful. Even if every business is constantly looking for more prospects, networking events are not necessarily about that. If you're wearing yourself out attending scores of networking events and still have very little results, you're having the wrong approach and wasting time.

THEREFORE, OTHER POINTS TO NETWORK SUCCESSFULLY AND TO AVOID MAKING MISTAKES ARE:

- **Networking events are not necessarily for the purpose of 'expecting' to find clients, although in the case of doing presentations, this could work in your favor.**
- **Giving out business cards must be done wisely.** Do not hand them out like candy to every person you meet.
- **Spend time building rapport with 'chit chat'** rather than immediately trying to sell them with your elevator pitch. That should be done only in due time (which is much later or in a sales meeting).
- **People are weary of underhanded sales techniques.** Forget about those. Unless the buying signs are obvious (which rarely happens at networking events) do not push sales like a used car sales person. Be genuine. Speak from the heart when asked about you and what you do. Be concise and clear about your differentiation point. "Enticing offers they cannot be refused" technique is overrated. It's perfectly acceptable to talk about what you do or offer, the problems you solve, and outcomes your clients get. Nevertheless, if you assume that everybody has a need for your services (refer to the *5 Step Sales Process* where #1 is "Find a need") and start selling indiscriminately you may chase away prospects instead of what you want – connections. If there is a need, and it is genuine, of course you will do everything you can to close that sale – so, schedule a sales appointment.
- **Many networking events are indeed insincere, pretentious, manipulative, or even unscrupulous.** Networking can be used in a superficial way of leveraging a connection in

a self-serving and inconsiderate way. If you hold such an attitude yourself, if your goals are solely narcissistic or you hold this belief about all networking, these are exactly the results you will get, and the people you will meet. Perception is Projection. However, there are also people who want to build genuine, mutually-beneficial relationships. When you're networking, you're going to have to sift through the people you don't want to know, to get to the people you do want to know.

- **Although the internet is one of the most used ways to network, do not keep your networking efforts isolated to the internet.** You can establish great connections online, but the most successful networkers are those who take those online connections and translate them into face-to-face relationships.
- **Watch out for parasites** - people who'll try to do too many favors for you; stop, and wonder why is that? Although comfortable to have someone always do things for you, remember the old saying "Me think doth protests too much". If you find a person attached to you like a leech, turn them down as politely as you can. Start to learn to say no. If they try to make you feel guilty, find an excuse to get out of the conversation and make yourself scarce to them. Just know that depending on the length of the relationship with you, when you start saying no, it will most likely cause them to act negatively toward you. Therefore, your general attitude and behavior toward everybody should be so good that it will supersede a disgruntled acquaintance. Behavioral excellence (be a model of excellence on stage and off stage) is one of the NLP basic tenets of our industry. Live up to it!